objective, at one and the same time. The artist should be both himself and the universe in his art,

The private individual, too, is a pilgrim in search of the truth of his, or her selfhood. If refinement means an awareness of the self and of the universe, and of their limitations and possibilities, the private individual is as much interested in his, or her refinement as the 'artist'. In her quest for refinement, Isabel Archer endeavours to force the universe to conform to her self-determined system of values, and in the process is awakened to her own innocence and ignorance. Although she realises her mistake, she resolves to respect the choice she had made in response to her own nature. As Verena, in *The Bostonians,* Isabel is encouraged to posit her self in the universe, and is called upon to make a choice between marriage and feminist movement; and once again Isabel, as Verena, is true to herself, as she prefers marriage to the feminist movement, to which she has been made to commit herself much against her own nature. In *The Portrait of a Lady,* Isabel strains the universe into the framework of her selfhood to discover that the self is free enough to preserve its integrity, but cannot master the ways of a mysterious world without the resources of an enlightened selfhood. In *The Bostonians,* Isabel, as Verena, places the self in the universe with a view to comprehending its ways and means, and discovers the existence of ubiquitous evil in the universe. Self-integrity soon takes the form of self-superiority and presumptuous self-righteousness in Fleda Vetch, in *The Spoils of Poynton,* who suffers from a moral delusion resulting from the distortion of the self by an incomplete knowledge of the self and of the universe. The self which Isabel had discovered as virtuous is affirmed by Verena and this affirmation of the self, although not bad in itself, implies the absence of integrity outside the self, and thereby leads to self-distortion in Fleda Vetch. Miliy Theale, in *The Wings of the Dove,* consummates Isabel's quest for illuminated selfhood by

achieving an equal awareness of the integrity of the self and of the universe, and even goes further ahead to perpetuate the truth of selfhood through self-sacrifice and self-transcendence in favour of a universe replete with the possibilities of refinement. Her achieved refinement, which is the result of an illuminated selfhood, is instrumental in refining Merton Densher. In *The Golden Bowl.* Maggie Verver releases the immense potentialities of the self and the universe in terms of an achieved refinement. Harmony between the self and the universe is established when the creative and corrective